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Abhilasha Tiwari
Rims College of Nursing,
Ranchi, Jharkhand, India

Impact of missed abortion & early pregnancy loss on mental health of women: A thematic narrative review

Abhilasha Tiwari

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Abstract

Background: Early loss of Pregnancy and Missed Abortion is shocking, traumatizing and un-bearable loss for women and the family members which leads to an adverse impact on mental health of women with an intense period of emotional distress and grief process. Women experiencing a missed abortion and early loss of pregnancy generally have no self-awareness due to the lack of obvious symptoms.

Significance of the study: Miscarriage can be a devastating event for women that can lead to short term as well as long-term emotional distress. While several studies have factors impacting the emotional wellbeing of parents experiencing miscarriage, there is a lack of review evidence which synthesizes the findings of post-abortion impact on mental health of women's. So the narrative review was done to understand the impact of early loss of Pregnancy and Missed Abortion on Mental health of women's.

Methodology: Reviews were conducted using Electronic data bases like PubMed, Science direct, and Google scholar on mental health impact due to missed abortion. Data was qualitatively analyzed thematically presented.

Discussion and Conclusion: Four major themes emerged after doing the reviews on impact on mental health due to early pregnancy loss and missed abortion: Miscarriage: A traumatic loss, anxiety Following Early loss of Pregnancy, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Post-Abortion Depression. Early Pregnancy loss can significantly contribute to the overall burden of psychopathology of women.

Keywords: early loss of pregnancy, missed abortion, impact on mental health

Introduction

Missed abortion is defined as unidentified intrauterine death of the embryo or fetus without expulsion of the products of conception. It constitutes approximately 15% of clinically diagnosed pregnancies¹. Women experiencing a missed abortion generally have no self-awareness due to the lack of obvious symptoms^[1].

Missed abortion is shocking and traumatic event for women and their families. It leads to an intense period of emotional distress and grief process. It takes several months to overcome, but some residual psychological concerns may remain. Most women in this circumstances do become pregnant again, yet mental health disturbances can still coexist. When women are having difficulties at conception, worries may be magnified. Management of mental health conditions like depression and anxiety symptoms after pregnancy loss can benefit future patient well-being^[2].

Significance of the study

Miscarriage can be a devastating event for women that can lead to short term as well as long-term emotional distress. Studies suggests associations between miscarriage and depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder in women. Men can also experience intense grief and sadness following their partner's miscarriage. While several studies have factors impacting the emotional wellbeing of parents experiencing miscarriage, there is a lack of review evidence which synthesizes the findings of post-abortion impact on mental health of women.

A cross-sectional study of 204 women who had experienced a missed abortion, diagnosed at 10-14 weeks of pregnancy, was conducted to examine the availability and desirability of routine follow-up care, and whether such care is associated with reduced psychological

Corresponding Author:
Abhilasha Tiwari
Rims College of Nursing,
Ranchi, Jharkhand, India

morbidity in the aftermath of miscarriage. Clinically elevated anxiety and depression were observed in 45% and 15% of women, respectively, and the mean score of grief was 2.52 which is similar to that observed in people who and the mean score of grief was 2.52 which is similar to that observed in people who suffer death of a close relative. A follow-up appointment after the miscarriage was thought to have been desirable by 92% of women but was offered to only 30%. No significant association between such care and reduced psychological morbidity was identified. However, there were significantly more women with clinically elevated levels of anxiety among those who felt that they were not provided with an opportunity to discuss their feelings during the follow-up, suggesting that such a follow-up either had a deleterious effect on women's psychological

state or the distress itself led to such a perception of care. One-third of women in our sample would have liked psychological counselling to help them deal with the emotional aspects of their loss ^[4].

Methodology

Reviews were conducted using Electronic data bases like PubMed, Science direct, and Google scholar on mental health impact due to missed abortion. Data was qualitatively analyzed thematically presented.

Discussion

Four major themes emerged after doing the reviews on impact on mental health due to early pregnancy loss and missed abortion and are presented in FIG.1

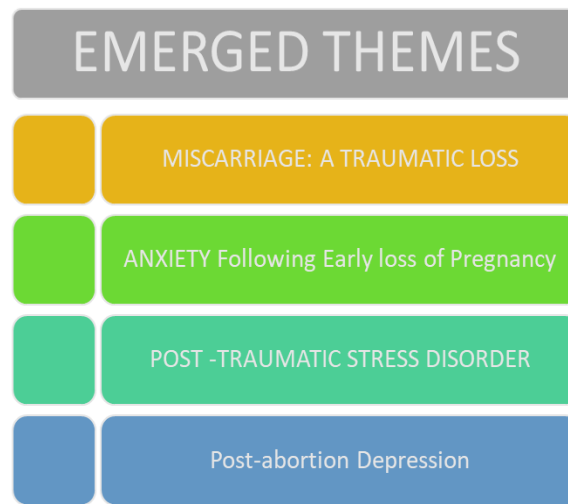


Fig 1: Emerged Themes

Summary and conclusion

A summary and conclusion of the papers included in this

narrative review is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary and Conclusion of the papers included in this narrative review.

S. No.	Thematic Area	Author & Year	Articles	Findings	Conclusion
1.	Anxiety following early loss of Pregnancy	Jessica Farren, <i>et al.</i> Nov 2018 ^[5]	The psychological impact of early pregnancy loss	Evidence of significant depression and anxiety in the first month following Early Pregnancy loss was found in women. Partners were also shown to display depression and anxiety, of lower level as compared to their wives. Evidence of post-traumatic stress was also seen	Early Pregnancy loss can significantly contribute to the overall burden of psychopathology within a population.
2.	Post-traumatic stress disorder	Engelhard IM <i>et al.</i> Mar-Apr 2001 ^[7]	Posttraumatic stress disorder after pregnancy loss	Prevalence of PTSD was 25%, among women who had early loss of pregnancy i.e. within 20 weeks. Women with PTSD had increased risk of depression:	Pregnancy loss is potentially traumatic, and women are at risk of developing PTSD. In most cases, the disorder is immediate and persists for several months
3.	Post-Abortion Depression		Postnatal Depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Risk Following Miscarriage	59.1% of women who had early pregnancy loss were found to be at increased risk of postnatal depression and 48.9% at high risk of postnatal depression; 44.7% of the women were considered to be at increased risk of post-traumatic stress.	An impaired relationship with one's body and childlessness has been the strongest predictors of psychological morbidity risk.
4.	Miscarriage: A Traumatic Loss	Bellhouse C <i>et al.</i> April 2019 ^[8]	The loss was traumatic... some healthcare providers added to that": Women's experiences of miscarriage	Experiences of women revealed that Miscarriage is associated with significant distress, grief and loss, and in some cases clinically significant levels of depression, anxiety, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is also found	It was suggested by the women to improve the service of healthcare providers in the event of a miscarriage, including referral to a psychologist, and ongoing follow-up after their miscarriage, which women felt would assist them with managing their distress.

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